

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

There is provided a method and system for collecting optical data for use in time resolved optical imaging wherein light is directionally propagated through free-space optics to impinge on a plurality of illumination at the surface of a biological tissue such as that comprised in small animals. Light re-emitted from the tissue is collected and directionally propagated through free space optics towards a detector to produce time resolved optical signals useful for optical image reconstructions.